Howland Wood - Curatorial

Marindin, F. Ritchie
[Architect,
Norwood, MA]

1932

April 6, 1932.

Mr. F. Ritchie Marindin
87 Gay St.
Norwood, Mass.

Dear Ritchie:

Your letter at hand and I am glad to know that you are working but sorry that you cannot do the work just now. However, although I would like to get it done reasonably soon, I am not in a dead rush so can wait awhile. I have been thinking it over and think it best to have you experiment a little because you might not be able to do it satisfactorily and again you probably will. I am enclosing herewith four of the pieces showing four distinct types of designs; one is incuse and the other three are in relief. One is bold, another in fine lines and another in indefinite lines. What I want is accurate drawings for reproductions. The cuts will be the same size but the drawings can be any size that the artist prefers to do them only they should all be done on the same scale. Under separate cover I am sending a few pamphlets showing the way coins have been treated by line drawing.

As there will be over 200 of these drawings we have got to do them in as economical a manner as possible and yet they must be done right. They should be accurate and show whether the thing is in high relief, low relief etc. It is not necessary to show the whole of the piece, simply as much as the inscription shows. In other words, we are not showing the whole of the piece but just the pattern, nor are we making drawings of the defects but rather a drawing just of the design. Therefore we do not show any curved surfaces.

Go ahead and experiment with these four pieces. If you have worked on Ross board you might try one or two on that. It would be impossible to send you all the pieces as they are not our property, also with a great many of them I would have to take up with the artist just how they are to be done.

Very truly yours,

HW:JG

April 18, 1932.

Mr. F. Ritchie Marindin
87 Gay Street
Norwood, Mass.

Dear Ritchie:

Over a week ago I sent you some of those silver pieces to make drawings of and as I have not heard from you that you have received them I am simply writing you to see if they reached you safely.

Very truly yours,

HW:JG

87 Gay St
Norwood Mass.

Dear Howland

I hang my head in shame at the extremely unbusinesslike way I failed to acknowledge the receipt of your two packages. They have reached me quite safely. And you may be sure I'm grateful to you for allowing me the opportunity to try this work for you.

I am experimenting with new tools of presentation and will soon have something to send for your criticism. I have found previously in making cuts etc. for reproduction that best results in both cleanness and good drawing are obtained by making the original at double (or even larger) the size finally desired with the idea of reduction by photostat to the exact size required. This may not be practical in this case I will send you some drawings pronto.

Yours

Ritchie Marinolin

April 19th 32

April 22, 1932.

Mr. Ritchie Marindin
87 Gay Street
Norwood, Mass.

Dear Ritchie:

I have also been thinking a little more on those drawings. Whatever size you make them would be all right but to avoid confusion in the reduction they ought to be made all the same enlargement.

At first I was thinking of putting the pen drawings in the text. I am now inclined to think I will put everything on plates at the end. These plates will include photographs as well. Therefore, fine shaded pencil drawings, Ross board drawings or wash drawings would do. Probably the chief thing would be to pick out a medium that can be done the quickest and produce results.

Very truly yours,

HW:JG

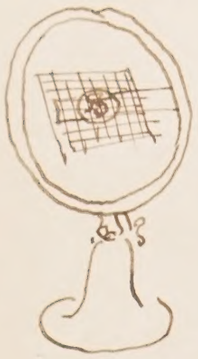
87 Gay St
Norwood Mass

Dear Haviland

I had some reductions made of a few sketches to see about technique & scale etc. The ink drawings show of course and the scale changed I think. I am trying some of wash and also some with conté crayon. I think the probable medium for best results will be a very careful pencil drawing on Whatmans hot pressed paper - something with a fairly smooth surface that can be erased.

I have been obliged to build a little rig to help with the drawing. I took a little piece of celluloid and scored squares about a sixteenth of an inch apart both ways and mounted it behind glass in a frame with a clip behind to hold the piece against the grid. Thus I can double, triple or

quadruple the scale directly in the final drawing which can be made directly.



Take a look at the enclosed and send me your comments and criticisms.

Yours

Ritchie

May 4, 1932.

Mr. Ritchie Marindin
87 Gay Street
Norwood, Mass.

Dear Ritchie:

Your drqwings are on the whole very satisfactory, I would, however, like to see possibly a wash drawing. As I wrote you in my last letter, I have decided to photograph directly some of the pieces. I am enclosing herewith a few I tried out.

The only criticism I have to offer so far is I would want no background, and, in the case of the second one, with a fine line inscription, artistry would have to be sacrificed a little for clearness. In this particular instance, a drawing would have to be made from two or three larins so as to get more of the inscription. The last one, the indefinite one, comes out very good in pen and ink.

As things are now going there is no great need for you to rush on here but let me know when you will probably be through with what you are doing, as I do not want you to throw up any job you may have.

Do not lose the photograph.

Very truly yours,

HW:JG

84 Gay St
Norwood Mass

Dear Haviland

Not two hours after I wrote you yesterday a man called me up and asked me to design a small conservatory for him - so if it's all right by you I won't come on till Sunday the fifteenth. It's only a small job and I can do it in two days easily I'm sure.

Yours

Ritchie Mannahin

Wednesday the 11th

May 13, 1932.

Mr. Ritchie Marindin
87 Gay Street
Norwood, Mass.

Dear Ritchie:

Your letter just at hand. It is certainly all right to get down Sunday, or, in fact, any day that you can. If you can make it, I would certainly go direct to Flushing. We will be away all day Tuesday and possibly Sunday until about seven o'clock.

Very truly yours,

HW:JG

WILLIAM G. UPHAM
ARCHITECT
NORWOOD, - MASS.

Dear Lawrence

Mr Upham wants me to stay on for at least two more weeks - due to a fire which made some work for us a couple of days ago. I had just about cleaned everything up when this came along. And you see, from a strictly selfish point of view I can't afford not to stay on as long as the goose lays his very golden eggs.

So if you can no longer wait for me I'm afraid I'll have to pass your job up to someone else. much as it gripes me. For it will be a long summer with nothing to do I'm afraid. I suppose there is no need for me to hint that I hope you are not yet in a rush for your stuff? And can still hold off?

I have been putting in very long hours at the office and believe me it has felt damn good to work against time again. We got off safely a set of sketches early last

Sketches which were required to be done up in a very grand ~~style~~ manner - photostated and bound in leather for the approval of the Cabinet and the signatures of the various members required. No wonder architects are not keen on federal work in good times as these sketches were very costly and of absolutely no use once they are done. It is not very profitable work due to the red tape, rigid requirements to be solved and low commission paid.

We also got out in the odd minutes between meals so to speak almost a complete set of working drawings for an addition to a high school in Wareham - on the Cape. The comparison between the two was most illuminating. On one case, assembling and presenting merely sketches of work that has been completely thought out - and in the other making a complete set of plans and specifications ready to get bids and actually build - both took approximately the same length of time.

It is a striking example of one reason why government is so expensive. Carrying the same thought a little further - this will probably happen; upon the completion

WILLIAM G. UPHAM
ARCHITECT
NORWOOD, - MASS.

of the working drawings at some distant date, the govt will ask for competitive bids, give the job to the lowest bidder who will be weak financially. Govt inspectors will give poor supervision which will result in much tardy rebuilding and replacing before final acceptance. The contractor will go broke and the bonding company will finish the job. Result. The usual patched up Federal building. This actually happens in a good many cases on the smaller govt work. And not the fault of the architect.

I hope you don't feel that I'm playing a game with your patience. It is just that I'm trying to make both ends meet somehow and keep busy as much as I can and so far I've been extremely fortunate. much more so than most of my friends in the profession. I'm sure you will understand and here's hoping you are not yet in a rush

Yours

Victor

If you can let me know the very last date at which I can get there to do the work I will

be obliged.

June 7, 1932.

Mr. Ritchie Marindin
/William G. Upham
Norwood, Mass.

Dear Ritchie:

I am certainly glad that you are full of work and keeping busy and you are absolutely right in grabbing and holding on to any real work. There is no fixed time for getting out this job except as with everything else the sooner the better. I take it that unless something else happens it would not be until the end of June that you could come down here. I will be here most of July but in August I will be away and as I would have to have pretty general oversight from day to day as you work you could not do much of anything in August. Therefore I would say to do what you can in July and if there is anything left over, which probably there will be, tackle it again in September.

Very truly yours,

H:JG

June 23, 1932.

Mr. F. Ritchie Marindin
87 Gay Street
Norwood, Mass.

Dear Ritchie:

We are going to be away from the 30th to the 5th of July, therefore, if you are planning to come down before the 5th, delay proceedings and do not. I trust you have been keeping busy and doing a proper amount of over-time to make up some of the under-time.

Very truly yours,

HW:JG

WILLIAM G. UPHAM
ARCHITECT
NORWOOD, - MASS.

Dear Rowland

I have been waiting from day to day for Mr. Upham to hear from Washington about the post office and have learned that it is all okay - and that they're in a rush for it. So Mr. Upham wants me to stay on with him and do the working drawings. This will take about two months, working at top speed according to my way of looking at it. We have been cleaning up various other small jobs in preparation for it which is a good idea. The detail required on these Federal jobs leaves no time for anything else.

So you see I shall have to stay on until September. I imagine you will see that to be too long a postponement —

I have four prints and a photo which I am sending on to Mr. Upham's office

together with the catalogs etc. you sent.

I take it you are spending the month of August at the shore - I envy you. Although Norwood is not too bad. It's fourteen miles out of town and as you know that means in the wilderness in Boston. We manage to get a swim every day after work in the lake and that is quite an improvement over working in town. I'm all for the modern trend toward decentralization - but I'm afraid my profession will continue pretty urban. What there will be of it. I have what I believe to be the only job in the state of Massachusetts in architecture. And only very temporary at that. The profession is in an awful fix. I was told today by a reports man that over 95% of the architects designers & draughtsmen in the state are out of work and what is worse have no prospects for the winter. Makes me feel a bit selfish to be working over time but its a selfish world and a cold winter ahead.

Please give my best to Elizabeth and the girls

Yours

Ritchie

July 14th

July 15, 1932.

Mr. Ritchie Marindin
87 Gay Street
Norwood, Mass.

Dear Ritchie:

Please send without delay those four larins I asked you to return sometime ago. I did not catalogue these before sending them to you and I want to do it now. I will be tied up until sometime after Labor day. Trusting your job up there is still holding out and that considering the times you are making a good thing of it, I am

Very truly yours,

HW:JG

July 23, 1932.

Mr. Ritchie Marindin
87 Gay Street
Norwood, Mass.

Dear Ritchie:

Your letter and the four larins came to hand the other day. Up to date the catalogues etc. have not shown up. Possibly you were delayed in sending the latter. Will drop you a line later.

Very truly yours,

HW:JG

September 23, 1932.

Mr. Ritchie Marindin
87 Gay Street
Norwood, Mass.

Dear Ritchie:

I am gradually getting back on the job and as I told you in the spring would let you know. However, things have changed slightly. We have done by photography what we originally intended to have drawings made of so that there is very little left to draw; in fact not enought to make it worth your while to come on, as I can get plenty of local talent to do the little work left. I am sorry it has worked out this way. Without checking up I think that you still have in your possession various prints, drawings and photographs I sent on to you. You returned the coins but I do not remember that you returned these.

Very truly yours,

HW:JG